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## WHERE ARE THE TEN TRIBES?

## II.

## ELDAD THE DANITE.

IT seems as if the mystery of the whereabouts of the *Ten Tribes* were not sufficient to engage imagination and speculation, as we find springing up under the name of the *Children of Moses* an additional and most important Tribe of Levi. This is only natural, for as Levi originally formed one of the Ten Tribes, it ought also to be found amongst them. The date of the first mention of these Children of Moses cannot be fixed with certainty, but at all events it was not later than the middle of the eighth century, about the time when the Talmud was closed.

It is reported in Arabic sources<sup>1</sup> that Aboo Isa (Obadiah), son of Isaac of Isphahan, one of the many opponents of the oral Law embodied in the Talmud, declared himself the fifth and perfect ambassador (Elijah) of the Messiah; for he believed in five ambassadors of the Messiah, one more perfect than the other. The Mohammedans had and have a similar belief in their seven Mahdi.<sup>2</sup> Aboo Isa also called himself the *Da'i* (the caller, prophet), for he believed that God had chosen him to deliver Israel from the yoke of the nations.

This is not the place to describe Aboo Isa's anti-Talmudical theories, or to give an account of his military exploits in the dispute between the Khalifs of the Omayyads and the Abbasides. In short, Aboo Isa had according to

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<sup>1</sup> Sharestani's *Book of Religious and Philosophical Sects* (in Arabic), edited by W. Cureton; German transl. by Dr. Th. Haarbrücker, I., p. 254. See also Dr. H. Graetz's *Geschichte der Juden*, vol. v. (2nd ed.), p. 433, sqq., to which we shall generally refer.

<sup>2</sup> See James Darmesteter, *The Mahdi, Past and Present* (translation by Miss Ada S. Ballin), London, 1888.

Maimonides,<sup>1</sup> more than 10,000 Jewish warriors at his disposal, and stood his ground for nearly four years (750 to 754 A.D.). Being hard pressed in Persia, he had to retire toward the north, to the neighbourhood of Raï, pretending that he was going to summon the Children of Moses, who inhabited this country, to participate in the war of deliverance. But he and his army succumbed on the defeat of Sinbad by the army of Ahnansur. The narrative of Aboo Isa's end is embellished with miraculous incidents. His adherents said that their chief with a staff of myrtle drew a circle round his army, telling them that so long as they remained inside this circle, they would not be vanquished. But he himself crossed the traced lines on horseback, killed many Mohammedans, and then fell, about 755.

Aboo Isa was not an impostor, but he believed in himself and in his mission to deliver Israel, and it seems that the Jews in Babylonia and Persia had full confidence in him. He is perhaps alluded to in a messianic Apocalypse, composed, according to Professor Graetz,<sup>2</sup> at this time, an opinion which we believe justifiable. It will perhaps interest our readers to have an abstract of this Apocalypse, which is the first of its kind, and of which all later Jewish writers on messianic predictions made use. Of course, as with most texts, there are some corruptions in it, and more especially in the proper names, which Professor Graetz, whom we follow, has happily emended.

The chief person<sup>3</sup> is the famous doctor of the Mishnah, R. Simeon ben Johai, who had to hide away from the persecution of the Romans. In his hiding-place he composed the famous *Zohar*, according to those who believe this book to be old; the critical school however regard it as a fraudulent concoction of the end of the thirteenth century. Anyhow, R. Simeon was regarded very early as the representative of mysticism, and the apocalypse is introduced by the words: "These are the mysteries which were unveiled to Simeon ben Johai."<sup>4</sup> After having fasted forty days and forty nights, and made prayer for accomplishment of the mystery of the "term" (יָמָא, the time of the arrival of the Messiah), he had a revelation that Edom (Rome) would have a strong enemy in Ishmael (Arabs). Khalifs from Omar I, who built the mosque on the

<sup>1</sup> Graetz, *op. cit.*, p. 440.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 441, sqq.

<sup>3</sup> See Dr. A. Jellinek's *Bet ha-Midrash*, Part III., p. 78, sqq., and IV., p. 117. The first Apocalypse has a short passage alluding to the time of the Crusades; whilst the second is, on the contrary, short on our epoch, and much more extended on that of the Crusades.

<sup>4</sup> The second is headed *Prayers of R. Simeon ben Johai*.

site of the Temple in Jerusalem, down to Merwan<sup>1</sup> the last of the Omayyads, are revealed to Simeon ben Johai. And after mentioning more messianic signs, and the wicked Kingdom (Byzantium) which would have dominion over Israel during nine months, the revelation continues that then the Messiah, son of Joseph,<sup>2</sup> will appear, carry Israel to Jerusalem, build the Temple, and institute the sacrifices which the holy fire will consume as in the time of grace (which was to be towards the end of 751). Then the bad King Armilos (Romulus)<sup>3</sup> will make war against the Messiah of the tribe of Ephraim, and drive him out together with Israel from Jerusalem. After forty-five days' wandering in the "desert of the nations," when Israel will be "proved and cleansed" by bad food and other torments, the Ephraimitic Messiah will be killed, and Israel will weep for his death. Then the true Messiah, the son of David, will appear, but he will be rejected by the suffering nation and be called an impostor, the Messiah having just perished. Then God in his mercy will show the true Messiah in a cloud. He will overpower Armilos, gather together scattered Israel and bring them to Jerusalem. The holy city, rendered unclean by the sojourn of the heathen, will be consumed, but God will send down from heaven a new city with the Temple ready built, in which all the nations will find delight. This happy messianic period will last 2,000 years, at the end of which time the day of judgment will come. The wicked will be thrown into Gehenna for twelve months, after which they will be brought to dwell in the garden of Eden and enjoy its fruits, as it is written: "Thy people *shall be* all righteous" (Isa. lx. 21).

Aboo Isa has probably a place in this apocalypse (composed between the fifth of August and October 750)<sup>4</sup> as one of the two Messiahs. The legend that a sudden recovery from leprosy made Aboo Isa believe in his high vocation, coincides with one of the names of the Messiah, reported in the Talmudic literature as "the leprous one."<sup>5</sup> Be that as it may, in Aboo Isa's time the Children of Moses were known to be somewhere in northern Persia; but the legend must be older.

<sup>1</sup> מריון in the second Apocalypse, corrupted in the first in מריאן, Dr. Graetz corrects (2nd ed., p. 443) מעריאן, unnecessarily, since there is anyhow a lacuna in the enumeration of the Khalifs.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Jellinek, *op. cit.*, III., p. xix., considers wrongly, we believe, the Messiah son of Joseph, and the Messiah son of Ephraim, as two different Messiahs, and consequently mentions three Messiahs.

<sup>3</sup> See Dr. Jastrow's *Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud, etc.*, a. v.

<sup>4</sup> See Graetz, *op. cit.*, p. 171.

<sup>5</sup> See *The fifty-third of Isaiah according to Jewish Interpreters*, by R. S. Driver and A. Neubauer, text, p. 8, translation, p. 7.

We shall find them mentioned later on<sup>1</sup> in a Midrash, and we have a description of their kingdom by a traveller whom we are about to introduce.

Towards the end of the ninth century<sup>2</sup> speculation concerning the whereabouts of the Ten Tribes was changed into a certain fact, the traveller Eldad pretending to have communicated with members of four of the Ten Tribes. The name Eldad was never employed by the Jews in the East, whom we find using strange names, both biblical and non-biblical. Eldad calls himself a Danite, and his pedigree which we find at the end of his diary<sup>3</sup> is startling. Moreover, he speaks only Hebrew, and employs unknown Hebrew words in the ritual rules which he brings with him from the Tribes; these rules, mostly concerning the ceremonies of slaughtering animals and the examination of their state of health,<sup>4</sup> are different from those in the Talmud. The ritual is introduced in the name of Joshua son of Nun, in one text of Eldad's diary, and in the name of the Judge Othniel, son of Kenaz, in another. These astonishing facts made the Rabbis of Kairowân (in Tunis), where at the time of which we speak there was a great school, doubt as to the veracity of Eldad's narrative. They indeed addressed themselves to the Gaon Zemah in Babylonia, asking his opinion about our traveller. We shall see<sup>5</sup> that this head of the school, provided his answer is genuine, blindly believed in Eldad; his strange words are used by grammarians and lexicographers for explaining passages of the Bible,<sup>6</sup> and authorities, Karaites<sup>7</sup> as well as Rabbanites,<sup>8</sup> quote as arguments these ritual rules of Eldad. His diary, which it is a mockery to call the Odyssey

<sup>1</sup> See below, p. 113.

<sup>2</sup> The reason for this date may be seen below, p. 108.

<sup>3</sup> See below, p. 103.

<sup>4</sup> הלכות שהיטה וטריפות.

<sup>5</sup> See below, p. 106.

<sup>6</sup> By Judah ben Koreish, a contemporary of Eldad (our statement in the *Journal Asiatique*, 1862, II., p. 206, has to be corrected according to Dr. P. F. Frankl, in Graetz's *Monatsschrift*, 1873, p. 482), according to R. Jonah ibn Jannah, passage given in Hebrew by David Kamhi (Kimhi), radix שנה; it was only the sceptical Abraham aben Ezra who doubted Eldad's veracity (see his commentary on Exodus ii. 21). In modern times the modest but profound critic, Jacob Reifmann, considers, perhaps rightly, the whole story of Eldad (whose description of the manners of the Tribes may be modelled on Philo's description of the Essenes), and of the Gaon's answers as spurious (see Hak-karmel, VIII., pp. 109, 254). Dr. Ginsburg (Kitto's *Cyclopaedia*, I., p. 756 of the 2nd edition) believes in Eldad, as he did during three weeks at least in Shapira's Deuteronomy.

<sup>7</sup> Judah Hedassi, in his *Eshkol hak-kefer*, sec. 60, ז, and sec. 62, ק.

<sup>8</sup> The Gaon and the Rabbis mentioned below, p. 104; Rabenoo Hananel of Kairowân. See Dr. Steinschneider's *Schlachtregeln in Arabischer Sprache*, in Geiger's *Jüd. Zeitschrift*, 1862 and 1863 (especially p. 311); R. Baruch mentioned in the ברדכי, as quoted by Dr. Graetz, *op. cit.*, p. 473.

of Eldad, soon spread, and became the Arabian Nights of the Jews. As is the case with most popular romances, we may expect to find different adaptations and different texts of Eldad's little book; indeed we possess at least three versions of it with substantial variations, and it forms even a part of a Midrash. It was translated into Arabic, Latin and German,<sup>1</sup> and most probably there were also Spanish and Italian translations, now lost. We shall see<sup>2</sup> that Eldad's diary not only reached Spain (it is not unlikely that through it the Jews there became acquainted with the Judæo-Khozaric Kingdom), but that he himself went to Spain by way of Kairowân and Morocco. The Spanish Jews were as yet little acquainted with the Talmud, and knew little of the condition of their brethren in Asia; they therefore listened to Eldad's stories with great curiosity. But before discussing Eldad's native country and the object and veracity of his narrative, we must give a free translation, according to one text<sup>3</sup> of his diary, together with the Gaon's answers to the Rabbis of Kairowân.

In the name of the Lord, the God of Israel. Praised be the name of the King of kings, the Holy One; blessed be he who has chosen Israel out of all nations, who has given them the Law and the Commandments; who has separated them from the seventy tongues,<sup>4</sup> and who has ordered them to keep the 613 precepts. So long as Israel fulfilled the will of God no nation could subdue it, until Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, rose, sinned, and made Israel sin, by making two golden calves. Then the kingdom of the house of David divided, and Jeroboam gathered together the Ten Tribes, and told them: "Rise up and make war against Rehoboam and Jerusalem." They, however, answered: "Why should we fight against our brethren and against the son of our master David, the King of Israel and Judah?" The elders of Israel said, "There are no more valiant warriors in all the tribes of Israel than in the tribe of Dan"; therefore Jeroboam ordered the children of Dan to make war against Judah. They, however, said: "By the life of our father's son we will not fight against our brethren, and shed their blood for nothing."

And they gave themselves up to death, took their swords, spears, and bows, in order to make war against Jeroboam; but God saved them from shedding the blood of their brethren. For they proclaimed throughout the whole tribe, saying: "Fly to Egypt!" And they took counsel to destroy Egypt, and to kill all its inhabitants. But their princes said to them, "How could you go to Egypt? Is it not written in the Law: 'Ye shall see them again no more' (Exodus xiv. 13)?" Then they took

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<sup>1</sup> See the Bibliography on p. 110 *seq.*

<sup>2</sup> Below, p. 99.

<sup>3</sup> Text C. See below, p. 112.

<sup>4</sup> This number is usually given in the Midraschic literature, of course as a round number. We hope it will not be used for the purposes of philology or folk-lore.

counsel to fall upon Edom, Amalek, and Ammon, when they heard that it was written in the Law that God had forbidden Israel to possess their territory (Deut. ii. 9, 17). Finally, God gave them good courage and advice, viz., to go up the river Pishon, to continue their wandering on camels, and to encamp, until they reached the land of Cush (Ethiopia), which they found fertile, with numerous vineyards and gardens. The Danites settled here, made a covenant with the children of Cush that they should pay tribute to Israel. Thus the Danites dwelled here for many years, multiplying and increasing greatly. They were then followed by three other tribes—Naphtali, Gad and Asher—who crossed the desert and encamped, until they came to the territory of the Danites. In their wanderings they slew many Cushites in a territory extending four days' journey in each direction, and they have been fighting with seven kingdoms up to this day. And these four tribes—Dan, Naphtali, Gad and Asher—and those who dwelt in the ancient Havilah, where there is gold (Gen. ii. 11), trusted in the Lord, who helped them against the kingdom of<sup>1</sup> . . . and these tribes put their hands on the neck of their enemies.

They make war every year with seven kingdoms and seven languages; the following are their names<sup>2</sup> . . . who are on the other side of the river of Cush. Thus the words of the Prophet—"From beyond the river of Cush my suppliants—even the daughter of my dispersed, shall bring mine offering" (Zephaniah iii. 10)—are fulfilled. These tribes possess much gold, silver, and precious stones, as well as sheep, oxen, camels, and asses. They sow and reap, dwell in tents and encamp in a land extending four days' journey, pitching their camps only in fertile places. The name of their king is Uziel, son of Malchiel, the name of their prince is Nicolay,<sup>3</sup> of the children of Ahliab, and the name of their judge is Abdan,<sup>4</sup> son of Michael of the tribe of Asher. They inflict capital punishment in the four modes prescribed in the law.<sup>5</sup> When going out to war, the trumpet is blown, and 120,000 horsemen and 100,000 foot soldiers gather round their chief. Every tribe goes out for a month's service, and remains three months, and when they return after the three months the spoil is divided amongst them all. The tribe of Dan, of the sons of Samson, is numerous as the sand of the sea, and their land extends four days' journey; they are very brave, and when going to war they are wont to say: "It is not good for the valiant to fly. The young man dies and does not fly, for his heart is

<sup>1</sup> A. has here no name at all, but has further on another name, viz., והם וקיימים במלכות פרויים ממשלת הורינוס B. חונים בחומה הנקרא הב דכי C. ובעזורים במלכות פרויים ממלכות הורינוס. The Arab translation has not this passage at all.

<sup>2</sup> We can only give these names according to the various texts, without attempting any identification:—

A. מוסינא וקמתו. B. ארדא ותיסקט וסרמ' וקאקא והוהם ורומרים ולודים. C. תוסינא וקמטוא וקובא ומראוניא. D. וקובא ותריאוג ותקולא וסרמא וקאלום ותקוב ובכמא וקאקוא. St. Petersburg MS., according to Dr. Harkavy's kind communication, reads like C.—תקול. מוסאניא. קובא. קמטוא. תוסינא. ככמא. קאקוא.

<sup>3</sup> ניקולי מבני אליהב; for variations of the other texts, see p. 111 *seq.*

<sup>4</sup> Text has אבדין, but surely a misprint. See also p. 111.

<sup>5</sup> ארבע מיתות בית דין סקילה שרפה הרג וחנק. See p. 107.

strong in God. My strength and my confidence lie in my weapon ; my heart will rejoice in the sharpness of my sword and in showing my delight in my horses. How many times hast thou made prisoners the women of Cush ?”<sup>1</sup> In this way they exult in the time of war.

And thus they do for the entire three months, when they return and bring all their spoil to the King Uziel, who divides it amongst all Israel who dwell in the land, devoting a part to the Lord. The tribes of Naphtali, Gad, and Asher take, each of them, three months in their turn.

There is also the tribe of Moses, our just master, which is called the tribe which flees,<sup>2</sup> because it fled from idol worship and clung to the fear of God. A river flows round their land for a distance of four days’ journey on every side. They dwell in beautiful houses provided with handsome towers, which they have built themselves. There is nothing unclean among them, neither in the case of birds, venison or domesticated animals ; there are no wild animals, no flies, no foxes, no vermin, no serpents, no dogs, and in general nothing which does harm ; they have only sheep and cattle, which bear twice a year. They sow and reap, there are all sorts of gardens with all kinds of fruit and cereals, viz., beans, melons, gourds, onions, garlic, wheat and barley, and the seed grows a hundred fold. They have faith ; they know the Law ; the Mishnah, the Talmud, and the Agadah, but their Talmud is in Hebrew. They introduce their sayings in the name of the fathers, the wise men, who heard them from the mouth of Joshua, who himself heard them from the mouth of God. They have no knowledge of the Tanaim (doctors of the Mishnah) and Amoraim (doctors of the Talmud) who flourished during the time of the second Temple, which was, of course, not known to these tribes. They speak only Hebrew, and are very strict as regards the use of wine made by others than themselves, as well as the rules of slaughtering animals ; in this respect, the Law of Moses is much more rigorous than that of the Tribes. They do not swear by the name of God, for fear that their breath may leave them, and they become angry with those who swear ; they reprimand them, saying, “Woe, ye poor, why do you swear with the mention of the name of God upon your lips ? Use your mouth for eating bread and drinking water.”<sup>3</sup> Do you not know that for the sin of swearing your children die young ?” And in this way they exhort every one to serve God with fear and integrity of heart. Therefore the children of Moses, the servant of God, live long to the age of 100 or 120 years. No child, be it son or daughter, dies during the lifetime of its parent, but they reach a third and fourth generation, and see grand-children and great grand-children with their offspring. They do all field-work themselves, having no male or female servants ; there are also merchants among them. They do not close their houses at night, for there is no thief or any wicked man among them. Thus a little boy might go for days with his flock without fear of robbers, demons, or danger of any other kind ; they are indeed all holy and clean. These

<sup>1</sup> These verses are certainly later additions, and we consider it scarcely worth while troubling ourselves with the variations of the other texts.

<sup>2</sup> יָנוּס, from נוּם. The Arabic translation reads يَنْوِس, but translates יָנוּס אֱלֹהָאֲרָב. Possibly this name is connected with the legend of Jannes and Jambres, the two sorcerers who tried to imitate the miracles performed by Moses. *Midrash Rabbah*, Exodus vii. 2, 11, and elsewhere. See Hamburger’s *Real-Encyclopædie*, II., p. 435.

<sup>3</sup> Perhaps more intelligible in the other texts, which have, “Is it bread to eat or water to drink ?”



Levites busy themselves with the Law and with the commandments, and they still live in the holiness of our master Moses, therefore God has given them all this good. Moreover they see nobody and nobody sees them, except the four tribes who dwell on the other side of the rivers of Cush; they see them and speak to them, but the river Sambatyon is between them, as it is said, "That thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth" (Isaiah xlix. 9). They have plenty of gold and silver; they sow flax, and cultivate the crimson worm, and make beautiful garments. Their number is double or four times the number of those who went out from Egypt.

The river Sambatyon is 200 yards broad, "About as far as a bowshot" (Gen. xxi. 16), full of sand and stones, but without water; the stones make a great noise like the waves of the sea and a stormy wind, so that in the night the noise is heard at a distance of half a day's journey. There are sources of water which collect themselves in one pool, out of which they water the fields. There are fish in it, and all kinds of clean birds fly round it. And this river of stone and sand rolls during the six working days and rests on the Sabbath day. As soon as the Sabbath begins, fire surrounds the river, and the flames remain till the next evening, when the Sabbath ends. Thus no human being can reach the river for a distance of half a mile on either side; the fire consumes all that grows there. The four tribes, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher, stand on the borders of the river. When shearing their flocks here, for the land is flat and clean without any thorns, when the children of Moses see them gathered together on the border, they shout, saying, "Brethren, tribes of Jeshurun, show us your camels, dogs, and asses," and they make their remarks about the length of the camel's neck and the shortness of the tail. Then they greet one another and go their way.

To us came the pious man Eldad, of the tribe of Dan, to bring good tidings to scattered Israel. When he left the land on the other side of the rivers of Cush, he travelled with a man of the tribe of Asher in a small boat, with the intention of doing some commerce with the crew, more especially to buy cloaks and jewellery. A great storm wrecked the boat in the middle of the night, but God prepared a plank for him and his companions, on which they kept floating, until they were thrown up amongst the tribe called Amarnum;<sup>1</sup> they are black as a raven, of high stature, and are cannibals. They seized at first the man of the tribe of Asher, who was fat and healthy, and devoured him alive. He cried out and said: "Woe to my mother who has borne me; woe to the Creator who has handed me over to a cruel death, for the Cushites eat my flesh." After having devoured this pious man they put a collar on Eldad's neck, intending to keep him until he became fat and healthy (for at present he was ill and lean) and gave him food. Thus he remained with the cannibals until God by a miracle saved him. Armed men from another place came upon the Cushites, took them prisoners, and slew them. Amongst the captives was this just Danite, and he remained with these fire-worshippers during four years, when they brought him to the province of Sin,<sup>2</sup> where a Jew paid the price for his ransom—thirty-two

<sup>1</sup> A. has אמרנום; B. רומרנום; C. אמרנים; a St. Petersburg MS. (according to the kind information of our friend Dr. Harkavy) has ממדינות איממה and so also in the German translation of 1700. Dr. Harkavy identifies this name without doubt with Yemama.

<sup>2</sup> China. We read with the St. Petersburg MS. and the German translation אלצין; B. and C. read אציץ, probably a corruption of אלצין.

pieces of gold. Eldad then continued his journey on sea until he reached dry land, and fell in with the tribe of Issachar, who dwell in high mountains near to the land of the Medes and Persians. They keep to the saying, "The Book of the Law shall not depart out of thy mouth" (Joshua i. 8). No worldly yoke is upon them, but only that of heaven; they are not at war with anybody, but their energy is devoted to the discussion of the Law; they are at peace with all, and have no enemy; they inhabit a land extending ten days' journey on every side. They possess much cattle, as well as camels and asses, and also male and female servants. The only weapon they possess is the knife for slaughtering animals. They are men of good faith, and in their hands is nothing stolen or robbed, and even their servants behave in the same faithful way, so that if on their way they come across much money they would not stretch out their hand to take it. Amongst them are fire-worshippers, who marry their mothers and sisters. They do not cultivate land or vineyards, but they do buy all for ready money. Their judge and prince is called Nahshon, and they use the four methods of capital punishment. They speak Hebrew, Persian, and Tatar.<sup>1</sup>

The children of Zebulon dwell in the mountains of Paran,<sup>2</sup> and their tents are planted from the Province of Armenia<sup>3</sup> to the river Euphrates.

The tribe of Reuben faces them behind the mountains of Paran; there is peace between these two tribes; they go together to war, make together the roads, and divide with one another the spoil. They travel through Persia and Babylonia, and pay two pieces of silver for a camel's load of food.<sup>4</sup> They speak Tatar, and they possess the Bible, the Mishnah, the Talmud, and the Agadah. Each Sabbath they study the Law, beginning with a Hebrew text, and commenting on it in Tatar.<sup>5</sup>

The tribes of Ephraim and half of Menasseh dwell in the Southern mountains in the province of the fool (Mahommed); they are of a horrid<sup>6</sup> mind and always on horseback, cut the roads, and have no mercy upon men; they have no other means of living than by spoil. They are valiant warriors; one of them will vanquish a hundred.

The tribe of Simeon and the other half of Menasseh<sup>7</sup> are in the land of the Khozars<sup>8</sup> and of infinite number; they take tribute from twenty-eight kingdoms, and many of the Ishmaelites are also subjected to tribute.

Now the name of this pious man who came to us is Eldad, son of Mahli, son of Ezechiel, son of Hezekiah, son of Elon, son of Abner, son of She-maiah, son of Hefer, son of Hur, son of Elkanah, son of Hillel, son of Ephraim, son of Tobiah, son of Pedath, son of Onan, son of Naaman, son of Taam, son of Taami, son of Onam, son of Saul, son of Sheled, son of Keleb, son of Amram, son of Doros, son of Obadiah, son of Abraham,

<sup>1</sup> קרר could also mean Arabic, but is used mostly for Tatar.

<sup>2</sup> A. has פראן, which Dr. Graetz (*op. cit.*, p. 475) emends in כראסן, Khorassan.

<sup>3</sup> ארמניה in B.; C. has ארמניה, which the late Carmoly revises by *Adjemi*, viz., the province called *Irac-Adjemi*.

<sup>4</sup> The passage is not very clear.

<sup>5</sup> C. has here "Hebrew," which is a copyist's mistake. See p. 111.

<sup>6</sup> This passage is not very clear; it certainly does not refer to the Mohammedans.

<sup>7</sup> C. has Judah, which is impossible.

<sup>8</sup> A. has קררים (ed. princeps כררים); B. כשרים; Petersb. אבריים (for which Dr. Harkavy suggests Iberia?). A. B. confirm our text כוריים.

son of Joseph, son of Moses, son of Jacob, son of Kafur, son of Ariel, son of Asher, son of Job, son of Shalem, son of Elihu, son of Ahliab, son of Ahisamach, son of Hushim, son of Dan, son of Jacob our father. The Holy One, blessed be he, who made us to know good tidings concerning our brethren, the Ten Tribes, he will gather our scattered ones from the four corners of the earth to the Temple together with all Israel's brethren. Amen.

These letters this Mar Eldad sent to Spain (Sepharad, Andalusia) in the year [46] 43 (= 883). Mar Eldad was full of the Law and the Commandments, and if some one was sitting with him from morning to evening his tongue would not cease from explaining the Law in Hebrew. His words are sweeter than honey and the honeycomb. May the Holy One, blessed be he, give him a good reward in this world and in the next.

The other two texts give almost the same facts, but in a different order; the most important variations we shall give later on, preferring this method to loading the footnotes. It would, perhaps, have been better to let these differences of the texts follow here, but as we do not like breaking our text in two parts, the substance of the questions put by the Rabbis of Kairowân to Zemah, and his answer will follow next. We purposely omit any abstract of Eldad's ritual rules, which would be tedious, and of no relevancy in our essay on the Ten Tribes.

"This is the letter of inquiry which the men of Kairowân have sent to R. Zemah, the Gaon of Jacob, concerning the reports of Eldad, the Danite, about the tribes which are hidden in the ancient Havilah in the land of Cush."

After the preamble, which is chiefly in praise of the Gaon in the diffuse oriental style, they write as follows:—"We beg to acquaint our master that a man named Eldad the Danite, of the tribe of Dan, was for a time amongst us, and told us that the four tribes, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher are all at Havilah, where the gold is to be found. They have a judge called Abdin, and they use the four modes of capital punishment; they dwell in tents, travel from place to place, and fight with the five kings of Cush.<sup>1</sup> The extent of their country is seven months' journey, but the five Cushite kings surround them on three sides and wage constant war against them, and whosoever is weak-hearted is given up to the inheritance of the Lord. These tribes possess the entire Scripture, they do not read the roll of Esther (not having been included in the miraculous salvation mentioned in it) nor the Lamentations, in order not to be disheartened.<sup>2</sup> In the whole of their teaching they mention no wise man, but refer all their

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<sup>1</sup> In our text there are seven kings.

<sup>2</sup> These two statements are not found in our texts, an omission which is one of Reifmann's arguments to prove the forgery of this document.

sayings to Joshua, who had received them from Moses, who in his turn had heard them from the Almighty. Every strong man gives himself up to military service, and every one of the four tribes attends to his department, the one to the war, and the others to the study of the law. They do not go to war mixed; the warriors of Dan serve their three months on horseback; they do not come down all the week, but on Friday they leave their horses, which remain saddled and ready; if no enemy appears, the Danites keep the Sabbath according to the statutes; in the contrary event, they go out armed and slay their enemies with the might of God, which is in them. There are also strong men of the children of Samson and Delilah, who rush into the war, and the smallest of them pursue many of the enemy; they each lift their voice and announce the victory with a lion's voice, saying: 'Salvation belongeth to the Lord, and upon Thy people, the tribes of Jeshurun, thy might, Selah'; so they continue for three months, when they return with all the booty to the King Uziel, who divides it equally amongst all Israel; the king gives his part to those who busy themselves with the Law. The same is the case with Gad and Asher, until the twelve months of the year are over. They speak only Hebrew, and Eldad himself understands not a word of Cushite (Ethiopic) or Ishmaelitic (Arabic), but only Hebrew, and he employs Hebrew expressions which we have never heard. For instance, he calls a pigeon *רִיבִּנְרָא*, a bird *רִיקוֹר*, pepper *דְּרִמּוּש*; we show him the objects and he gives the names which we write down; after some time we repeat the same questions, and he gives the same words as before. The Talmud (the teaching) of these tribes is in Hebrew, and they do not mention any wise man, neither doctors of the Mishnah, nor of the Talmud, but they say for each Halakah, 'This is the tradition we have from the mouth of Joshua, from the mouth of Moses, from the mouth of the Almighty.' Eldad explained to us the ritual about slaughtering animals and examining their state of health, whether the meat is fit to be eaten or not;<sup>1</sup> which we saw to be the same as that prescribed in the Law, but with some differences. We have thought it necessary to put before you, our master, some parts of their Talmud, *verbatim*; there are many astonishing rules as our master will see on examining them."

Here follow the rules for slaughtering animals, which incline more to the Karaitic *Halakah*, if we may employ this expression, than to the directions of the Talmud.

The letter then continues, "Eldad has told us the following story. When the temple was destroyed and Israel had to go to Babel, the Chaldees asked them to sing the song of Zion. The children of Moses stood up, cried in their sorrow to the Holy One, blessed be he, and broke their fingers with their teeth, meaning to say, How can we strike an instrument in an unclean land with the same fingers which we used in the Temple? Then a cloud came and carried them with their tents, sheep, and oxen to Havilah, and brought them down there during the night." The question ends with the history of the Sambatyon, with slight variations the same as given above. We should have expected that a scholar like the Gaon Zemah, even if he did not find out the charlatanism (perhaps the credulity) of Eldad, ought at least to have had some hesitation in believing all that he reported. Zemah's answer, as will be seen, gives Eldad the highest testimonial for veracity. He says, "As to the matter of Eldad, about which you have written to me, I can affirm that some of the Rabbis have told me that they heard from the mouth of R. Isaac ben Mar and R. Simhah,<sup>1</sup> who knew Eldad personally, the same that you have heard from him; they also were astonished to find that in some parts his teaching agrees with the Talmud, and in others it differs. We find, indeed, in Scripture passages justifying some of Eldad's narrative. For when Sennacherib carried into exile the tribe of Zebulun in the fifth year of King Ahaz, from the foundation of the Temple to the eighth year of Ahaz, which makes about twenty-six years, the Danites, who were great warriors, seeing that the king of Assyria was going to get dominion over Israel, went to Cush and encamped there, in a large land with gardens of every kind, fields and vineyards, in one word, full of all good things; they gave their heart to serve God in fear, and to observe all his commandments, and thus they received two crowns, the crown of the Law and of the Kingdom;<sup>2</sup> that is exactly what Eldad told you. Elsewhere our Rabbis say that Israel was led into exile ten times, viz, four times by Sennacherib, four times by Nebuchadnezzar, once by Vespasian, and once by Hadrian;<sup>3</sup> Dan is, however, not men-

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<sup>1</sup> It is not necessary to place these two Rabbis outside of Babylonia, as Prof. Graetz is inclined to do (*op. cit.*, p. 478), since it is really proved that Eldad was in Babylonia. See below, p. 108.

<sup>2</sup> The third crown is the priesthood. Comp. *Aboth* (Saying of the Fathers), IV. 13.

<sup>3</sup> Compare the *Midrash of Exile* in Dr. Jellinek's *Bet ha-Midrash*, V., p. 112, and Abraham ben David's *Chronicle of the Kings of the Second Temple*, ed. Amsterdam, 1711, p. 77<sup>b</sup>.

tioned in these ten exiles, because the tribe went away of their own accord into Cush 135 years before the destruction of the Temple. Therefore it seems to me that there is no fault to find with Eldad, since it is possible that Dan departed only during the third exile. Eldad reports that the tribes use the four modes of capital punishment, viz., stoning, burning, slaughtering, and strangling. It is true that the last is not mentioned in the Law, but the Rabbis inferred it, saying that wherever in the Law we find capital punishment mentioned without specification, strangulation is intended. As to the children of Moses, who are with the tribes, and are surrounded by the Sambatyon, we find the same in the Midrash,<sup>1</sup> where it is said, that when Nebuchadnezzar made captive sixty myriads of Levites, it happened to the children of Moses as related by Eldad, when they came with their harps to the rivers of Babel.

“Before the arrival of our fathers in Canaan, they had been so much occupied with wars, that they had forgotten the Mishnah (teaching) which they received from the mouth of Moses and from the mouth of Joshua (peace be with them), who according to some had many doubts after the death of Moses. The tribes which remained in the Holy Land, viz., Judah and Benjamin, held firm to the Law. After all there is nothing astonishing in finding differences and changes in our teaching, and that which you have heard from Eldad, for the same is the case with the Mishnah, which was handed down by the Babylonian and Palestinian doctors with great accuracy, without addition or diminution, and yet variations crept into it through the teachings of the pupils, who gave various explanations, just as would be the case with two Hakhamim (orders of the Mishnah) in explaining differently passages of Scripture or Mishnah. Why, even in Scripture of which the text has been fixed, we find the Babylonian and the Palestinian schools varying as regards *scriptio plena* and *defectiva*, the spaces between the sections, the accents, and the division of verses; why should we then not admit variation in the Mishnah, which is too deep a subject to be easily understood? Excuse may be found for that; in the troubles and misfortunes of travelling, Eldad may have unintentionally reported a Halakah in another sense than that usually known. However, the second Law (the Talmud) is one, it is not permitted to add to it nor to take from it, and there is moreover no variation in it whatever, small or great; only that the Talmud was composed in

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<sup>1</sup> Compare *Midrash of Exile*, p. 115, and Abraham ben David, *op. cit.*, p. 78<sup>b</sup>, and below, p. 113.

Aramaic in Babylonia, in the dialect of the Targum in Palestine, and in Cush in Hebrew, the only language known by the exiles there. That in this last Talmud no authority of the Rabbis is mentioned, is to be explained from the fact that the Mishnah taught in the Temple was anonymous, as there were no wise men to explain it. Anyhow, the Law is the same in the Mishnah as in the Talmud, for they flow both from the same source; and it is wrong to explain everything, for it is written, 'It is the glory of God to conceal a thing' (Prov. xxv. 1). As to Eldad's words that the tribes pray first for the wise men in Babylonia and then for the rest of the exiles, I think that they do rightly, for the stem of the wise men and the prophets was exiled to Babylonia; it is they who fixed the Law, and founded a school on the river Euphrates in the time of Jehoiachin, King of Judah.<sup>1</sup> And up to this day there is in Babylonia the chain of wisdom and prophecy, and from here the Law goes forth to the whole nation of the Jews. I have made known to you that we all drink of the same source; keep firm in what the wise men teach you, and do not deviate to the right or to the left from their words, as it is written: 'According to the sentence of the Law which they will teach thee, and according to the judgment which they shall tell thee, thou shalt do'' (Deut. xvii. 11). The belief in Eldad by such an authority as the Gaon, can only be explained by the delight which he and the other Rabbis must have felt on hearing of the prosperous state of the lost tribes, coupled, perhaps, with the hope of a sudden restoration of the Jewish nation.

The late Dr. P. F. Frankl<sup>2</sup> has, by an ingenious conjecture made it certain, in our opinion, that Eldad was in Babylonia, where he saw R. Isaac ben Mar and R. Simhah, most probably in the year 4640 (880).<sup>3</sup> At that time he had already his new ritual with him, of which R. Hai ben Nahshon could take no copy because Eldad was "in a hurry to continue his travels." Was that really the reason? Certainly not, for a couple of hours would have been sufficient to make a copy of it. Later on we find him at Kairowân, and then in Spain, about 4643 (883). This date is not only fixed by MSS. and the editions of Eldad's diary, but its correctness is also proved by the following passages in the letter of the Prince Hasdai ben Shaprut (or Saport), minister of Abdu-l-Rahman in 940, addressed

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<sup>1</sup> Compare R. Sherira's letter (ed. Oxford, 1887), p. 26.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Graetz's *Monatsschrift*, 1878, p. 423, sqq.

<sup>3</sup> According to Ibn Yahya's *Chain of Tradition*, Venice, 1587, fol. 37<sup>b</sup>.

to the King of the Khozars: he says,<sup>1</sup> "And in the days of our fathers a wise man of Israel fell in with us, of the tribe of Dan, whose pedigree reached back to Dan the son of Jacob; he spoke pure Hebrew and gave a Hebrew name to each object. No matter was hidden from him. And when he got up to teach a Halakah, he introduced it with the words: 'Othniel, son of Kenaz, received it from Joshua, from Moses, from the Almighty.'" This passage refers, no doubt, as Professor Graetz says,<sup>2</sup> to our Eldad, who was in Andalusia in the time of Hasdai's grandfather. Had Eldad been a *bonâ fide* traveller, he would have given an account of the cities he visited along with his fabulous account of the tribes, just as Benjamin of Tudela, whom we shall have to mention in the course of our essay, has done in his diary. The date of 880 for Eldad's appearance is also corroborated by a Karaite document,<sup>3</sup> on which, perhaps, we may place more reliance than we usually can on exaggerated dates in Karaite authors. And if this date is accurate, and we believe it is, then the Gaon Zemah, provided he is the author of the famous answer which goes under his name, would be Zemah son of Hayyim of Sura (889-896).<sup>4</sup> No doubt Eldad's story is fanciful throughout. The name Eldad, as we have already said, is unusual. Moreover Eldad is not given as a Danite in the Bible. The names of the countries which our traveller gives, if we admit that they are corrupted by copyists, are not to be identified at all.<sup>5</sup> His capture by cannibals, and his landing in China belongs to romance. And Professor Graetz is certainly on the right side when he says that Eldad heard in Egypt of the existence of the Falashas in Abyssinia; in Constantinople of the Khozars on the Volga; and in Palestine or Babylonia of the Jews at Haibar in Arabia; and from these *data* he placed the Ten Tribes in these countries. From the Midrash or a current oral legend he knew of the children of Moses whom he depicts in such heroic form. In one word, he was a daring impostor crowned with an unexpected success. Now, the question arises, Did he deceive without any aim, or had he some objects in view? The former opinion is maintained with great skill and learning by the late Dr. Frankl.<sup>6</sup> He even suggested that Eldad came from a Greek-speaking country (Constantinople?), for

<sup>1</sup> Edition of Buxtorf in his translation of the *Kusari*, pp. b 4 and c 4.

<sup>2</sup> See Graetz, *Geschichte der Juden*, V., p. 476.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 477.

<sup>4</sup> Zemah ben Kafnai would be too late. See Dr. Steinschneider's *Catal. Libr. Hebr. in Bibl. Bodl.*, col. 2726.

<sup>5</sup> See the variations above, p. 100.

<sup>6</sup> Dr. Graetz's *Monatsschrift*, 1873, p. 481, sqq.



the new Hebrew words which he introduces are Greek.<sup>1</sup> This we cannot admit, even if we have to give up our suggestion that they are Hebraized forms of Arabic words.<sup>2</sup> We are rather inclined to hold with Professor Graetz<sup>3</sup> that Eldad was a cunning emissary of the Karaites. His ritual rules, as Professor Graetz has shown, incline in many respects to Karaitic interpretation. His emphatic mention that the tribes quote no names of the doctors of the Mishnah as authors of the ritual rules, but say they have them handed down from Joshua and Moses,<sup>4</sup> and, much more, his statement that the tribes have no Talmud,<sup>5</sup> point to Karaitic teaching. Of course, in order not to betray himself, Eldad shows great respect for the Gaonim,<sup>6</sup> the conservators and continuators of the oral tradition. The Karaites indeed followed step by step Rabbanitic congregations wherever they settled. They originated in Persia, installed themselves in Babylonia, formed congregations in Palestine, were very numerous in the Byzantine empire and Egypt, and from there they went to Morocco and Spain.<sup>7</sup> Karaites are mentioned in Dra<sup>8</sup> and Fez. Here the Danite tradition seemed to continue; we find there indeed in the tenth century a certain Abudani and his friend David, the deaf, or the smith.<sup>9</sup> In the eleventh century we hear of a great movement of Karaitic propaganda in Spain by Ibn Altaras and his wife, called the Teacher,<sup>10</sup> and in order to produce such a movement, Karaites must have been settled in Spain long before that time.

For completeness sake, we may be allowed to give here the outlines of the bibliography of the texts containing Eldad's memorable narrative, which are three.

A. The text printed in Dr. A. Jellinek's "Bet ha-Midrash," part I., pp. 102 to 106, which is followed by the question of the

<sup>1</sup> תנתירא, "pigeon," would be derived by Eldad from *τροθορίζω*, "to speak inarticulately, mutter, babble," and דרמוש, "pepper," from *δριμύς*, "sharpness." Why did Eldad, as a Greek-speaking Jew, not use the common words like *τρογών*, *περιστρέφός*, and *πέπρι*. Is it not a strange idea to take Eldad as a common impostor, and to credit him in the meantime with philological innovations?

<sup>2</sup> *Journal Asiatique*, 1862, II., p. 206.

<sup>3</sup> *Geschichte der Juden*, V., p. 473, sqq.

<sup>4</sup> See above, p. 101.

<sup>5</sup> See above, p. 101.

<sup>6</sup> See above, pp. 108.

<sup>7</sup> See A. Neubauer, *Aus der Petersburger Bibliothek*, pp. 55 sqq.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* p. 22, and Graetz, *op. cit.*, V. p. 477.

<sup>9</sup> אבודני ודוד החרש (*Litteraturblatt des Orients*, 1845, p. 563). These two cannot be identified with Eldad and his companion of the tribe of Asher. Abudani is a contemporary of R. Saadiah Gaon (920-980). Curious it is that they are from Fez, and come from Palestine. Was it the case with Eldad also?

<sup>10</sup> Abraham ben David's *Book of Tradition* (ed. Oxford, 1887), p. 79.

Rabbis of Kairowân, and Zemah's answer, pp. 106 to 113. It contains also Eldad's ritual. The order of the diary is as follows:—1st. The journey of the tribes and their wars, in which the king is called Uziel, son of Michael, but no prince and judge are mentioned (page 100 of our translation). 2nd. The history of the Children of Moses (p. 101). 3rd. The story of the cannibals and Eldad's arrival in China (p. 102). It is introduced by the words: "Behold, there came to me a pious man of the tribe of Dan"; consequently this text was not written down by Eldad. The dwellings of the tribes of Issachar in the mountains on the border of the sea, towards the land Persia and Media; their judge and prince is called Nahshon, and they speak Hebrew, Persian, and Kedar (Tatar); Zebulun dwells on the mount פריזן, which Dr. Graetz emends into כרסאן, Chorassan. Near to this mountain dwells Reuben; they both speak the language of Kedar, but their teaching (Bible, Mishnah, Talmud, and Agadah) is in Hebrew. Ephraim and half Manasseh dwell in the mountains towards the town (read מדינת for מדינות, as in the editio princeps<sup>1</sup> and German translation) of the Ishmaelitic prophet (ed. prin. מדינת המשווע in the German translation, "where the Ishmaelitic prophet is buried"), called Mekka, and in their language Kaba (קיאבע). Simeon and half Manasseh are in the land of the Tatars (קדריים, ed. princ. כדריים, probably כוזריים, Khozars), six months distant from Jerusalem; the Ishmaelites pay them tribute. The compiler goes on to say: "And the man who reported all this belonged to the tribe of Dan."

Then follows Eldad's pedigree (with many variations) from the patriarch Jacob. Next come the questions of the Rabbis of Kairowân, with the text of Eldad's ritual, given in the name of Joshua, son of Nun—and Zemah's answer. The text is given from the edition printed at Zolkiew, 1772, which is erroneously given by Dr. Jellinek, as a reprint of the edition of Constantinople, 1516. It is a reprint of the editio princeps (Mantua, before 1480). The German translation (Jesnitz, 1743) has, after the pedigree, the passage beginning in our translation with the words: "And the pious Eldad reported much concerning the four tribes who dwelt in Havilah" (p. 103), and ending with the following: "The pious Eldad knew no other language than Hebrew (p. 105). And thus he related as you have read." (The last sentence is evidently added by the translator.) The German translator

<sup>1</sup> Mantua, before 1480.

continues with the passages concerning the tribes which we find in Benjamin of Tudela's diary (ed. Asher, pp. 83 and 90), but given here as if Eldad were the author, followed by the postscript of the translator.

B. A second text (part II., pp. 6 to 11), reprinted from the Constantinople edition of 1519. It contains polemics against the Christians and the Mohammedans. It begins with a part of the prologue (p. 99), and introduces Eldad's narrative (in which Eldad speaks in the first person), with the following sentence: "And now we shall tell the story of our brethren, the tribes of Jeshurun, according to Eldad; how he travelled from his own tribe; the wonders by which God saved him from many calamities which befell him on his journey to announce good tidings, to the children of Israel scattered in the captivity." The narrative begins with the incident of the cannibals and China (p. 102). Issachar's dwelling is in the mountains of the deep (תְּהוֹמוֹת), and they speak only Hebrew and Persian. Zebulun dwells in the mountains of פֶּאֶרְזִי, and they use for their tents hairy material coming from Armenia, and they extend to the Euphrates. The Reubenites, who conform to the habits of the King of Media and Persia, speak Hebrew and Persian, and their explanations of the Law are in Persian.

Ephraim and half of Manasseh dwell in the mountains towards Mekka, and Simeon and the other half of Manasseh in the land of Kasdim (כּוּזַרִיִּים Khozars). Then comes the following in the name of Eldad: "We say in our land that we have a tradition that you children of the captivity, the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, are scattered under the dominion of the Romans (who destroyed the house of our God), the Greeks (Byzantium) and the Ishmaelites." Next comes the story about Dan refusing to fight and settling in the land of Cush (p. 99). Then followed the history of the wars of the other tribes (carried into captivity by Sennacherib in two conquests) against the seven adjacent nations. The king is called here Uziel, the great prince Elizaphan of the children of Eliahab of the tribe of Dan, on whose white flag is inscribed in Hebrew, in black letters, the verse: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord" (Deut. vi. 4). This is followed by the story about the Children of Moses. Two words in this text seem to be Latin, or at least of a Romance language, the word הלפנט, *elephant*-, and פרינסיף, *princeps* (p. 10 in the text, our translation p. 101). The pedigree which follows differs from that given in A.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> There exists a MS. of this text in the British Museum, Add. 27, 119, of which we have made use, and another in Parma Dr. Rossi, 424.

C. The third text, part V., pp. 17 to 21, is a reprint from the Venice edition of 1544, which is most likely a reprint of the edition of Constantinople, 1516. On this text our translation is based; we found it, with Dr. Jellinek, to contain the most logical text, and the best style; it contains moreover the important date of Eldad's sending his letter to Kairowân and Spain.<sup>1</sup>

This text was translated into Latin by G. Genebrard,<sup>2</sup> by an anonymous translator into Judæo-German,<sup>3</sup> and also anonymously into Arabic.<sup>4</sup> The extracts given by Bartolucci<sup>5</sup> and Eisenmenger<sup>6</sup> are equally taken from this text.

Besides these three recensions there must have existed at least one other containing the passages given by Judah Hedassi,<sup>7</sup> and most likely a fifth in which the passage in regard to the Rabbis of Kairowân, that the Tribes do not read the book of Esther and Lamentations,<sup>8</sup> ought to be found. In fact Eldad most probably wrote nothing except the ritual, and it was one of his audience who put together the story, which was perhaps told differently by Eldad, either from a bad memory or from his purposely modifying it to suit his audience.<sup>9</sup> This would best explain the existence of various texts, which we do not find in the case of the other few Jewish diaries<sup>10</sup> we possess.

A sixth text of the history of the Ten Tribes and the Children of Moses,<sup>11</sup> which does not mention the name of Eldad, is to be found in the famous *Midrash Major*, attributed by Raymundus Martini to R. Moses har-Darshan of Narbonne.<sup>12</sup> This text

<sup>1</sup> Of this text there is a MS. in the Bodleian Library, No. 2585 of the new Catalogue, which is, however, only a copy of the Venice edition. The St. Petersburg fragments seem also to belong to this recension. We have mentioned a few variations communicated to us by our friend Dr. Harkaway.

<sup>2</sup> *Chronologica Hebræorum Major*, op. 5.

<sup>3</sup> According to Dr. Steinschneider (*Catal. Bodl.*), Dessau circa 1700.

<sup>4</sup> MS. St. Petersburg, 2nd Firkowitz collection, fragments in Nos. 674 and 703, with some variations from our text.

<sup>5</sup> *Bibliotheca Rabb. I.*, p. 100.

<sup>6</sup> *Entdecktes Judenthum*, II., p. 539.

<sup>7</sup> *Eshkol hok-Kofer*, secs. 60 and 61.

<sup>8</sup> See above, p. 104.

<sup>9</sup> Dr. Jellinek, *Bet ha-Midrash V.*, p. x., note 2.

<sup>10</sup> For instance, Pethahiah of Regensburg, Benjamin of Tudela, and the travellers in the Holy Land.

<sup>11</sup> Published in Dr. Jellinek's *Bet ha-Midrash VI.*, pp. 15 to 18. The title of משה רבני משה is the editor's invention, which might be misleading for bibliographers.

<sup>12</sup> See the recent discussion on the authenticity of this Midrash, called מדרש רבה (in the Prague MSS.), and מדרש רבה in the Oxford fragment (MSS. No. 2399 of our catalogue); Dr. Schiller-Szinessy's article in the *Journal of Philology*, Cambridge, vol. XVI., No. 31, p. 130 sqq.; our essay in the *Expositor*, February-March, 1888, pp. 101, sqq. 299, and Herr A. Epstein's able paper in the *Magazin für die Wissenschaft des Judenthums*, XV. (1888), pp. 65 to 99. The Oxford MS. has better readings than the MSS. of

goes mostly with C, and in the beginning of it we find the legend about the Levites breaking their fingers in order not to play the harp in a foreign country. This legend is introduced with the words: "Our Rabbis say, just as reported by the Gaon Zemah." Perhaps this Midrash is the oldest of all the Eldad texts, which was later enlarged with Eldad's story as an introduction or a postscript. It is, however, possible that the compiler of the Midrash has left out the Eldad legend, which had no importance for his Midrashic explanation of Genesis xxx. 24.

It is our painful duty to mention the text edited<sup>1</sup> with a French translation and notes by the late C. Carmoly, from a copy made by Ephraim Adamar of a MS. in the library of R. Eleazar ben Hazan at Morocco, sent to the editor by R. David S'bah. That this is a forgery has been strikingly proved by Rapoport,<sup>2</sup> chiefly from the contradictions in the dates; we could add further proofs from the style and the divisions of the chapters. Dr. Graetz did not make use of it in his excellent history, and does not even mention it. We, too, should have preferred doing the same, only that we wish to be bibliographically complete. Who the forger of this text was it is not our duty to investigate.

A. NEUBAUER.

[*To be continued.*]

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Prague, *e.g.*, the passage in Jellinek's, p. 17, שכורתי'ן בדרך מדות ודרך ... משא נמל עין which is quite unintelligible, reads in the Oxford MSS. (fol. 46<sup>b</sup>) בדרך מכות (Mekka) ודרך בבל ... משא נמל מן מאכל

<sup>1</sup> *Relation d'Eldad le Danite*, Paris, 1838.

<sup>2</sup> In the letter addressed to the editor of Solomon Parhon's lexicon, and printed in the preface to the edition, p. xi.

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